

Rough draft of application for foundation grant
Subject to approval and revision of Council Assembly
(Particular attention should be directed to items
no. IV, V, and VI; these items need to be expanded
and/or clarified.)

Gentlemen:

The governing Assembly of the Clinton Hill Neighborhood Council is pleased to present for your consideration the following outline of what we feel to be a unique neighborhood improvement effort.

I. The problem we face. By the close of 1955, the problems of the Clinton Hill area of Newark, once a fashionable upper-middle-class neighborhood, were becoming painfully obvious. As a result of natural population growth and relocation from other areas, schools were overcrowded, recreational facilities were practically non-existent, and adequate housing was hard to come by. Perhaps more important, there was a declining faith in the neighborhood's future; little was being done to welcome newcomers, many of them Negro, or to stem the tide of those moving out.

II. What has been done. The general feeling, however, was that the area was worth saving. Its spacious streets, many elegant homes, convenient shopping facilities and strong religious institutions were the backbone of a natural community. Furthermore, among the community leadership, there was a clear vision of a unique neighborhood where barriers of color or religion did not exist. In December of 1955, the Clinton Hill Neighborhood Council was formed. The Council has been non-partisan, voluntary, and non-profit - open to any interested person. Its work encompasses all areas of civic concern. Three areas, however, deserve special attention:

Housing: A housing committee was formed to channel the many violations of the housing code to the proper city agencies and to educate home-owners to the provisions of the code. Annually a highly successful clean-up, fix-up campaign has been conducted, in conjunction with the Junior Chamber of Commerce. Each year a community conference focuses attention on particular problems; last year on housing and education, this year on citizen participation in neighborhood improvement.

Education: An education committee was organized to press for a new school and additions to two existing schools, a step made necessary by split-session classes and the lowering of educational standards.

Recreation: Although Clinton Hill is the only section of Newark without a park or a community swimming pool, much has been done in this area. Trips have been organized to take children to Olympic Park. As a lot became vacant, citizens rallied to protest the building of a supermarket, and the lot has been designated as

a future play area under the Urban Renewal Plan. This summer will see the second YM-YWCA Summer Fun Program (interfaith), co-sponsored by the Council, which will provide recreational facilities for 100 youngsters at nominal cost. Each year a massive Halloween parade is sponsored by the Council, with noticeable lessening of vandalism.

III. What we would like to do. During the five years that the Neighborhood Council has been active in these and other critical areas, we have come time and again to focus on the city-wide lack of middle-income housing. There is not only a need to provide housing for those whose homes are slated for destruction under renewal plans, but there is a need, as well, to retain persons of high civic concern, to attract families back to the city, to provide housing for the elderly; in short, to stabilize the area and preserve the integrated character of the neighborhood.

When the Council was formed to preserve a community, it was done with the realization that we ourselves were responsible for identifying and solving our own problems. It is in this spirit that we now propose to move ahead by taking the initiative and working to bring co-operative middle-income housing into the area.

IV. How we propose to do it. Recognizing our own professional inadequacies, it is our proposal to hire a housing promoter, whose function it would be to create financial interest in such a co-operative housing venture. It would be the further function of such a person to study existing legislation, to explore the wide range of possibilities, and to crystalize community sentiment.

V. Budget. For a two year period we estimate the following budget:

Salary of promoter	- \$10,000	(\$20,000)
Salary of part-time secretary	- 2,000	(4,000)
Professional services, legal fees, etc.	- 5,000	(10,000)
Office expenses	- 500	(1,000)

Total for two years: \$35,000

VI. How we propose to raise this budget, including this foundation request:

Committee making this report:

Hickman Holmes
Louis Pitts
Helen Winters
Joanne Geyer